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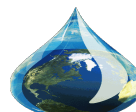
FORECASTING YOUR WATER SUPPLY: CAPABILITIES AND GAPS FOR COLORADO RIVER FORECASTING

SPEAKER: KEVIN WERNER
NOAA/NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE COLORADO BASIN RIVER FORECAST CENTER

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The Colorado River provides critical freshwater resources to most of the population, agriculture and industry in the southwestern United States. However, increasing demand and a decade of drought have driven water levels in the two major reservoirs to historic low levels in recent years. While the wet 2011 brought short-term relief, the region remains particularly vulnerable to climate change. NOAA's Colorado Basin River Forecast Center has a long history of generating seasonal forecasts for water supply and peak flow in the Colorado Basin. Demand for ever more skillful forecasts has grown dramatically as a result of the region's precarious water resources situation. Stakeholders are increasingly asking for products and services at the frontiers of science. This talk will describe these challenges and facilitate discussion on moving forward with meeting these challenges.

Kevin Werner is Service Coordination Hydrologist at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Weather Service's Colorado Basin River Forecast Center. He works to connect water predictions and science with people and organizations that benefit from forecasts and understanding of the Colorado and Great Basin rivers. The River Forecast Center has expertise in forecasting water from the very short flash-flood timescale to the longer seasonal scale for water supply. All of these forecasts provide critical information to decision makers. In previous positions Kevin has worked to infuse new science and technology into river forecast operational procedures and methodologies.